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SUGGESTIONS TO LEADERS OF CLASSES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

BY GEORGIA L. CHAMBERLIN

Referring to the outline which the members of the group have been entering in their notebooks, and which the leader has in his possession, note particularly the statement at the beginning of sec. 3. Let this statement be carefully kept in mind from this time on. Note also for the benefit of the class that the work of the month covers the first three divisions under Part III. It may be well for the leader to give a brief summary of the preceding sections in order to inform the new members, and also to get the older members into the situation afresh.

This Gospel, while so largely a treatise on Jesus, cannot be easily grasped without a map. For instance, the work of this month represents Jesus as traveling from place to place. This should be clearly shown to the class in order that there may be an increasingly definite reality in the events and persons and in Jesus, the central figure.

Programs for the meetings may be as follows:

FIRST MEETING

1. The Feast of Purim—its origin and its observance among the Jews of today.
2. A simplified dialogue between Jesus, the sick man, and the Jews, giving the substance of chap. 5.
3. The story of the day of the loaves and fishes, and the following night, as related by each of the gospel writers.
4. An arrangement in dialogue of the substance of the scenes of the following day, as recorded in 6:22 ff.

Discussion: How would a crowd of ordinary people in our modern world who had never heard of Jesus receive him if he were here and should speak to them the words of these chapters?

SECOND MEETING

1. The Feast of Tabernacles—its origin and characteristic observances.
2. Evidences of growing division between the followers of Jesus and the Pharisees.
3. Biblical allusions to life-giving water—Isa. 55; Rev. 21, 22; Jer. 2:13—and other phrases which suggest that the Jews were accustomed to figures of speech and might possibly understand them more easily than philosophical discussion.
4. A definition of salvation as discussed in this Gospel.

Discussion: Quotations from this and preceding chapters which would be most practical in evangelistic work with different classes of people.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What made the healing miracle of Jesus at the pool of Bethesda especially remarkable?
2. Why did the Jews object to it?

3. From what source did Jesus claim to receive his power?
4. How did he extenuate himself from the charge of "working" on the Sabbath?
5. Name four kinds of "witness" claimed by Jesus in 5:30-47.
6. What two remarkable material miracles are recorded in chap. 6, and what is the subject of the discourse to which the account of them leads?
7. What custom of the church continuing to the present time is in the mind of the author of the Gospel as he relates this discourse?
8. On what terms does this Gospel claim that eternal life may be secured?
9. Which of the three doctrines—the virgin birth, the atoning death, or the inspiring life of Jesus—is most practically helpful to you?
10. How does this Gospel answer the current objection of the Jews to Jesus as the Messiah—that he was of obscure and humble parentage?
11. In what sense was Jesus' presence in the world a judgment of it?
12. What belief of the author accounts for his certainty that Jesus was master of all the situations of his life?
13. What custom lies back of Jesus' discourse on the "living water," and what does Jesus mean by "living water"?
14. In what spirit did the Pharisees receive such statements as those of Jesus concerning the "bread of life," and the "living water"?
15. Were the common people in sympathy with the Pharisees and the "Law"?
16. Under what figure does Jesus describe himself in chap. 8, and with what promise does he accompany his statement?
17. What contrast does Jesus make between sin and truth in this chapter?
18. How great had become the enmity of the Jews as reflected in Jesus' statements in chaps. 5 to 8.
19. To what does Jesus attribute this hatred?
20. What teachings, valuable for religious life today, do you find in the chapters covered by the study of the month?

REFERENCE READING

Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* may be consulted for information regarding the feasts to which allusion is made and the places alluded to. Beyond that the best helps will be found in the modern commentaries on this Gospel. The best are: *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, "St. John," Plummer, pp. 121-97; *The New Century Bible*, "St. John," McClymont, pp. 164-212; for local color Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* is best.

TRAVELING LIBRARIES FOR MINISTERS¹

The books represented by the following important lists are contained in the traveling libraries circulated by the Institute to ministers and students of religion. Each library is accompanied by a pamphlet of 30-50 pages discussing the general subject and the books.

The Apostolic Age

(Arranged by Professor George H. Gilbert)

Harnack, Adolf, *The Acts of the Apostles*.
 Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity* (2 vols.).
 Bacon, *The Founding of the Church*.
 Dobschütz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church*.
 Weinel, *St. Paul: The Man and His Work*.
 McGiffert, *The Apostolic Age*.
 Gilbert, G. H., *Christianity in the Apostolic Age*.
 Wrede, *Paul*.
 Meyer, *Jesus or Paul*.
 Weiss, *Paul and Jesus*.
 Ropes, *The Apostolic Age in the Light of Modern Criticism*.

The Character of Jesus in the Light of Modern Scholarship

(Arranged by Professor Shirley J. Case)

Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission*.
 Scott, *The Fourth Gospel, Its Theology and Purpose*.
 Schmiedel, *Jesus in Modern Criticism*.
 Bousset, *Jesus*.
 Sanday, *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*.
 Weiss, *Paul and Jesus*.
 Weiss, *Christ: The Beginnings of Dogma*.
 Lake, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus*.
 Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*.
 Warschauer, *Jesus: Seven Questions*.
 Sanday, *Christologies: Ancient and Modern*.
 Case, *The Historicity of Jesus*.

The Efficient Church

(Arranged by Shailer Mathews)

Lyman, *The Christian Pastor in the New Age*.
 Tucker, *The Function of the Church in Modern Society*.
 Jefferson, *The Building of the Church*.
 Mathews, *Scientific Management in the Churches*.
 Faunce, *The Educational Ideal in the Ministry*.
 Haslett, *The Pedagogical Bible School*.
 Cope, *The Modern Sunday School in Principle and Practice*.
 Henderson, *A Reasonable Social Policy for Christian People*.
 Butterfield, *The Country Church and the Rural Problem*.
 Wilson, *The Church of the Open Country*.
 Hodges, *The Administration of an Institutional Church*.
 Addams, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*.
 McKinley, *Educational Evangelism*.
 Stelze, *Principles of Successful Church Advertising*.
 Sears, *The Redemption of the City*.
 Grose, *Aliens or Americans*.
 McAfee, *Missions Striking Home*.
 Speer, *Christianity and the Nations*.
 Carver, *Missions and Modern Thought*.
 World Missionary Conference Reports, 1910:
The Home Base of Missions, Vol. VI.
Co-operation and Unity, Vol. VIII.

Ministers or groups of persons wishing to secure one of these libraries should address the American Institute of Sacred Literature, the University of Chicago, Chicago.

¹ For \$3.50 one of these libraries will be sent, transportation charges paid, to any address in the United States or Canada. Fifty cents additional is required for the discussions. Term of loan, four months.